

The background of the cover is a vibrant tropical scene. A waterfall cascades down a dark, rocky cliff on the right side. In the foreground, there are large, bright red flowers with yellow centers. The sky is a mix of purple and blue, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The overall mood is serene and idyllic, representing a paradise.

PARADISE

ITS BLESSINGS AND HOW TO GET THERE

BY

ALI HASAN
ABD AL - HAMID

TRANSLATED BY:

HUDA KHATTAB

DAR IBN HAZM

الْبَهَاءُ

نَعِيمُهَا وَالطَّرِيقُ إِلَيْهَا

بِقَلَمِ

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***IN THE NAME OF ALLAH
THE MERCIFUL THE COMPASSIONATE***

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PARADISE

**-its Blessings and
How
to Get There**

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In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most merciful

«Allah has promised to Believers, men and women, Gardens under which rivers flow, to dwell therein, and beautiful mansions in Gardens of everlasting bless. But the greatest bless is the Good Pleasure of Allah: that is the supreme felicity». (al-Tawbah 9: 72).

«And [Allah will] admit them to the Garden which He has announced for them». (Muhammad 47: 6).

NOTE ON ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations are used in this book:

SWT- *Subhanahu wa Ta'ala (May He be glorified and exalted).*

SAAS- *Sall-Allahu'alayhi wa sallam (May Allah bless him and grant him peace).*

RA- *Radi Allahu'anhu* (May Allah be pleased with him)
Radi Allahu'anha (May Allah be pleased with her)
Radi Allahu'anhum (May Allah be pleased with them).

AS- *'Alayhis-Salam* (Peace be upon him) *'Alayhim al-Salam* (Peace be upon them).

NOTE ON TRANSLATION OF QUR'ANIC QUOTATIONS

The translation of quotations from the Holy Quran are adapted from the commentary translation and Cammentary by A. Yusuf Ali (1983 edition, published by Amana Corp., U. S. A). The adaptations are:

1- The archaic style of English used by Yusuf Ali has been updated, i. e. the pronouns «thou», «ye» have been altered to «you», Verbs have been amended accordingly, so that «goeth» becomes «goes», etc.

2- The word «God» has been replaced with the word «Allah».

Preface

Praise be to Allah: we praise Him and seek His help and forgiveness. We seek refuge with Him from the evils of our own souls and deeds. Whomever Allah guides, no-one can lead astray, and whomever He leaves astray, no-one can guide. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah Alone Who has no partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His Slave and Messenger.

Paradise is the abode of the Muttaqin [pious, God-fearing], the home of those whom Allah has blessed: the Prophets, the Truthful Ones, the martyrs and the righteous, a place from under whose gardens flow rivers, whose palaces are built of bricks made of gold and silver, and mortar made of the finest-smelling musk; its pebbles are pearls and sapphires, its soil is saffron, and its tents are hollowed-out pearls.

Paradise is a shining light, a beautiful flower, a flowing stream, abundant produce and enchanting companions.

The people there live a life of ease. They eat, but pass no impure substances, such as mucus or urine, from their bodies. They only sweat, but even their sweat is musk. They only laugh and do not weep; they remain there and never leave. They live and do not die; their faces are glowing, laughing and cheerful.

In Paradise there is stunning beauty, and al-Hur al'-Ayn¹, and eternal bliss. Indeed, all is happiness. There the veil is lifted and the victorious ones see the face of Allah, the Almighty, the Bestower (al-'Aziz, al-Wahhab).

In Paradise there are things which no eye has seen and no ear has heard, not have they occurred to the human heart..

The Prophet of goodness, guidance and light, Muhammad ibn'Abdullah, (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon Him) (SAAS), has told us all about this place. It was revealed to him by his Lord, Allah, the Almighty, the High-Exalted (al-'Athim, al-Muta'al). It is the best of glad tidings, brought by the best of mankind (SAAS).

Scholars of all ages have written many works on the subject of Paradise, and have described its blessings and those who dwell there.

I Wanted to draw upon the works of these scholars, selecting the most sound of their comments and adding further necessary research². I pray that Allah (SWT) will cause me and my righteous brothers to join that band of pure worshippers, for He is the All-Hearing, All-Knowing (al-Sami', al-'Alim), who answers prayers. May Allah bestow blessings and peace upon the most noble of messengers, Sayyiduna Muhammad al-Amin, and upon his Family and Companions.

Abu'l-Harith Ali ibn Hasan

Footnotes:

1. *Al-Hur al-'Ayn*: The word Hur in Arabic carries connotations of purity, beauty (especially of the eyes), and truth and goodness. As with all other blessings of Paradise, the exact nature of these Companions cannot be known. (see Yusuf Ali, *The Holy Qur'an: Translation and Commentary*, notes 4728-9 and 5053) [Translator].
2. I have not, in this brief work, included all the verses of Quran and Ahadith which refer to and describe Paradise -to do so would at least double the length of this book. The present short volume is just a reminder to myself and my brothers.

CHAPTER ONE

THE LONGING OF THE RICHTEOUS FOR THE ETERNAL ABODE OF PARADISE

Paradise is the ultimate aspiration towards which the Believers of all eras have striven. It was the burning desire in the hearts of the Pious Predecessors (al-Salaf al-Salih) which motivated them to set the highest example of heroism, Jihad and sacrifice.

Paradise is the noble aim towards which the longing of many souls has been directed, at all times and in all places- so much so that many have willingly undergone suffering in order to attain their goal of Paradise.

Paradise is the greatest desire of the Believer: reaching Paradise is the hope for which he looks throughout his life.

In many cases, Paradise has been the motive for good deeds, even in the face of great danger, and

even when following the Truth has meant certain death. This was the case during the time of the Prophet (SAAS), as Anas (RA) reported:

The Messenger of Allah (SAAS) and his Companions set out quickly and reached Badr before the *Mushrikin* (lit. polytheists, i. e. the pagan Makkans). When the *Mushrikin* reached Badr, the Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said [to his Companions]: «Nobody should make a move until I say so».

The Mushrikin approached, and the Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said: «Get up [and fight] for Paradise which is as wide as the heavens and the earth!».

Umayr ibn al-Humam al-Ansari said: «O Messenger of Allah, [do you really mean] Paradise as wide as the heavens and the earth?».

The Prophet (SAAS) said: «Yes».

Umayr said: «Excellent!».

The Prophet (SAAS) said «What do you mean by saying Excellent?».

Umayr said: «O Messenger of Allah, by Allah [I meant] nothing but the hope that I may be among its people!».

The Prophet (SAAS) said: «You [will be] one of its people».

Umayr took some dates from his quiver, and began to eat them, then he said: «If I live long enough to finish these dates then it will be a long life indeed!» Then he threw away the dates and joined the battle, fighting until he was killed¹.

Such was the attitude as well, of the generation who followed the *Sahabah*. During one battle, Abu Musa al-Ash'ari said: «The Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said: "Truly Paradise lies in the shadow of the swords". A scruffily-dressed man said: "O Abu Musa! Did you really hear the Messenger of Allah say that?" Abu Musa said: "Yes." The man returned to his companions and said, "I bid you farewell. Then he broke the scabbard of his sword, threw it aside, and entered the fray until he was killed»².

Footnotes:

1. Muslim (1901); see also al-Albani, *Takhrij Fiqh al-Sirah*, p 243.
2. Muslim (1902), al-Tirmithi (1659), Ahmad (4/396 and 411), al-Haakim (2/70), Abu Nu'aim (2/317). See also: Muhammad al -Sabbagh, *al-Taswir al-Fanni fi'l-Hadith al-Nabawi*, P 152-179, and al-Albani, *Irwa' al-Ghalil* (5/7).

CHAPTER TWO

PARADISE CLEARLY DESCRIBED IN THE QUR'AN

Allah (SWT) has described Paradise in the Qur'an in such a marvellous way that it is as if we had seen it. Descriptions of Paradise occur in many passages of the Qur'an. Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Almighty says:

«The Righteous (will be) amid Gardens and fountains (of clear-flowing water). (Their greeting will be): 'Enter here in Peace and Security'. And We shall remove from their hearts any lurking sense of injury: (they will be) brothers (joyfully) facing each other on thrones (of dignity). «There no sense of fatigue shall touch them, nor shall they (ever) be asked to leave» (al Hijr 15: 45-48).

«Allah will admit those who believe and work righteous deeds, to Gardens beneath which rivers flow: they shall be adorned therein with bracelets of gold and pearls; and their garments there will be of silk.» (al -Hajj 22: 23).

«Verily the Companions of the Garden shall that Day have joy in all that they do; They and their associates will be in groves of (cool) shade, reclining on Thrones (of dignity); (Every) fruit (enjoyment) will be there for them; they shall have whatever they call for; Peace!- a Word (of salutation) from a Lord Most Merciful!» (Ya Sin 36: 55-58).

«And those who feared their Lord will be led to the Garden in crowds: until behold, they arrive there; its gates will be opened, and its Keepers will say: "Peace be upon you! Well have you done! Enter here, to dwell therein.» (al-Zumar 39: 73-74).

«As to the Righteous (they will be) in a position of security, among Gardens and Springs; Dressed in fine silk and in rich brocade; they will face each other; So; and We shall join them to Companions with beautiful, big and lustrous eyes. There can they call for every kind of fruit in peace and security.» (al-Dukhan 44: 51-55).

«(Here is) a Parable of the Garden which the right-

eous are promised: in it are rivers of water incorruptible; rivers of milk of which the taste never changes; rivers of wine, a joy to those who drink; and rivers of honey pure and clear. In it there are for them all kinds of fruits; and Grace from their Lord. (Can those in such Bliss) be compared to such as shall dwell for ever in the Fire, and be given, to drink, boiling water so that it cuts up their bowels (to pieces)?» (Muhammad 47: 15).

«As to the Righteous, they will be in the midst of Gardens and Rivers, in an Assembly of Truth, in the Presence of a Sovereign Omnipotent.» (al-Qamar 54: 54-55).

«And those foremost (in Faith) will be foremost (in the Hereafter). These will be those nearest to Allah: In Gardens of Bliss: A number of people from those of old, And a few from those of later times. (They will be) on Thrones encrusted (with gold and precious stones), reclining on them, facing each other. Round about them will (serve) youths of perpetual (freshness), with goblets, (shining) beakers, and cups

(filled) out of clear-flowing fountains: No after-ache will they receive therefrom, nor will they suffer intoxication: and with fruits, any that they may select: and the flesh of fowls, any that they may desire. And (there will be) Companions with beautiful, big, and lustrous eyes, -like unto Pearls well-guarded. A Reward for the Deeds of their Past (life). No frivolity will they hear therein, nor any taint of ill, -only the saying, Ppace! Peace.

The Companions of the Right Hand, -what will be the Companions of the Right Hand? (They will be) among Lote-trees without thorns, among Talh trees with flowers (or fruits) piled one above another, -in shade long-extended, by water flowing constantly, and fruit in abundance, whose season is not limited nor (supply) forbidden, and on Thrones (of Dignity), raised high. We have created (their Companions) of special creation, and made them virgin-pure (and undefiled), -beloved (by nature), equal in age, -For the Companions of the Right Hand. A (goodly) number from those of old, and a (goodly) number from those of later times» (al-Waqu'ah 56: 10-40).

«And because they were patient and constant, He will reward them with a Garden and (garments of) silk. Reclining in the (Garden) on raised thrones, they will see there neither the sun's (excessive heat) nor (the moon's) excessive cold. And the shades of the (garden) will come low over them, and the bunches (of fruit) there, will hang low in humility.

And amongst them will be passed round vessels of silver and goblets of crystal, crystal-clear, made of silver: they will determine the measure thereof (according to their wishes). And they will be given to drink there of a Cup (of Wine) mixed with Zanjabil, - A fountain there called Salsabil. And round about them will (serve) youths of perpetual (freshness): if you would see them, you would think them scattered pearls. And when you look, it is there you will see a bliss and a realm Magnificent. Upon them will be green Garments of fine silk and heavy brocade, and they will be adorned with bracelets of silver; and their Lord will give to them to drink of a Wine pure and holy.» (al-Insan 76: 12-21).

«Verily for the Righteous there will be a fulfilment of (the Heart's) desires; Gardens enclosed, and grapevines; Companions of Equal Age; and a Cup full (to the Brim). No vanity shall they hear therein, nor Untruth; -recompense from your Lord, a Gift, (amply) sufficient, -(from) the Lord of the heavens and the earth, and all between, -(Allah) Most Gracious: none shall have power to argue with Him. The Day that the Spirit and the angels will stand forth in ranks, none shall speak except any who is permitted by (Allah) Most Gracious, and he will say what is right.» (al-Naba' 78: 31-38).

«But give glad tidings to those who believe and work righteousness, that their portion is Gardens beneath which rivers flow. Every time they are fed with fruits therefrom, they say: "Why, this is what we were fed with before", for they are given things in similitude; and they have therein Companions pure (and holy); and they abide therein (forever).» (al-Baqarah 2: 25).

«Say: "Is that [the fire, described in preceding Ayat]

best, or the eternal Garden, promised to the righteous? For them that is a reward as well as a goal (of attainment). For them there will be therein all that they wish for: they will dwell (there) for ever: a promise to be prayed for from your Lord.» (al-Furqan 25: 15-16).

«This is a message (of admonition): and verily for the Righteous, is a beautiful place of (final) return, -Gardens of Eternity whose doors will (ever) be open to them; therein will they recline (at ease); therein can they call (at pleasure) for fruit in abundance and (delicious) drink; and beside them will be chaste women restraining their glances, (companions) of equal age. Such is the Promise made to you for the Day of Account! Truly such will be Our Bounty (to you); it will never fail.» (Sad 38: 49-54).

«And the Garden will be brought nigh to the Righteous, -no more a thing distant. (A voice will say:) This is what was promised for you, -for everyone who turned (to Allah) in sincere repentance, who kept (His Law), who feared (Allah) Most Gracious

unseen, and brought a heart turned in devotion (to Him): Enter therein in Peace and Security; this is a Day of Eternal Life! There will be for them therein all that they wish, -and more besides in Our Presence.» (Qaf 50: 31-35).

«Those who believe, and work righteousness, -their Lord will guide them because of their Faith: beneath them will flow rivers in Gardens of Bliss. (This will be) their cry therein: Glory to You, O Allah! and «Peace» will be their greeting therein! And the close of their cry will be: «Praise be to Allah, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the Worlds»!» (Yunus 10: 9-10).

CHAPTER THREE

DESCRIPTIONS OF PARADISE

IN

THE SOUND AHADITH¹

The Prophet Muhammad (SAAS) described in depth, and with a wealth of appealing detail, the Paradise which Allah (SWT) has promised to the Righteous. The believers find reassurance in this information, the righteous and repentant relish this knowledge.

1- The First People to Enter Paradise

From Anas ibn Malik (RA) who said: The Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said: «On the Day of Resurrection, I will come to the gate of paradise and ask for it to be opened. The gatekeeper will ask: "Who are you" and I will answer: "Muhammad". Then he will say: You are the one before Whom I was ordered not to open the gate for anyone.» (Muslim)².

From Huthayfah (RA) who said: The Messenger of

Allah (SAAS) said: «The children of Adam will all be under my banner on the Day of Resurrection, and I am the first one for whom the gates of Paradise will be opened»³.

2- Description of the First Group to Enter Paradise

From Abu Hurayrah (RA) who said: The Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said: «The first group of people to enter Paradise will be shining like the full moon, and the next group will be shining like the brightest star. They will pass neither urine nor stools nor mucus, neither will they spit. Their combs will be made of gold, their sweat will be musk and their incense-burners will be made of aloewood. Their Companions will be *al-Hur al-Ayn*. Their hearts will be as the heart of a single man. They will be in the image of Adam, his height being sixty cubits» (Agreed upon).

3- The Gates of Paradise

From Abou Hurayrah (RA): The prophet (SAAS) said: «Whoever spends in the Way of Allah, will be called from the Gates of Paradise: "O Slave of Allah,

this is good." Whoever performs *Salat* (Prayer) will be called from the Gate of Salat. Whoever performs Jihad will be called from the Gate of Jihad. Whoever fasts will be called from the Gate of al-Rayyan. Whoever gives charity will be called from the Gate of Charity». Abu Bakr al-Siddiq (RA) said: «May my father and mother be sacrificed for you, O Messenger of Allah! Whoever is called from these gates need not fear, but is there anyone who will be called from all of them?» The Prophet (SAAS) said: «Yes, and I hope that you (Abu Bakr) will be one of them.» (Agreed upon).

From Sahl ibn Sa'd who said: The Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said: «There are eight gates in Paradise. One of them is a gate called al-Rayyan, and none shall enter it except those who observe fasting.» (al-Bukhari).

4- There is No Death in Paradise

From Abu Sa'id and Abu Hurayrah (RA): The Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said: «When the people of Paradise enter Paradise, a voice will call out to them:

"You will live and never die; you will remain healthy and never fall ill; you will remain young and never grow old; you will enjoy a life of ease and never suffer"». (Muslim).

5- Different Levels of Paradise:

From Abu Hurayrah (RA) from the prophet (SAAS) who said: «Whoever believes in Allah and His Messenger, and establishes regular Prayer and fasts Ramadan, will be admitted by Allah to Paradise, whether he migrated for the sake of Allah or remained in the land of his birth». (His Companions) asked: «O Messenger of Allah! Shall we tell the people about this?» He said: «In Paradise there are one hundred levels which Allah has allocated to those who strive in Jihad for His sake. The distance between each two of these levels is like the distance between the heavens and the earth. If you ask anything of Allah, ask Him for *al-Firdaws al-A'la*, for it is in the centre of paradise and its highest point; above it is the Throne of the Most Merciful, and from it flow the rivers of Paradise». (al-Bukhari)⁴.

6- Description of the People of Paradise

Form Mu'ath ibn Jabal (RA): The Prophet (SAAS) said: «The people of Paradise will enter Paradise hairless, as if with kohl in their eyes, and ages thirty or thirty-three years.»⁵

From Abu Hurayrah (RA) who said: The Prophet (SAAS) said:

«There Will enter Paradise People whose hearts are like the hearts of birds».

From Anas (RA) form the Prophet (SAAS) who said: «The Believer in Paradise will be given such-and-such strength for sexual intercourse.» He was asked: «O Messenger of Allah, will he be able to bear that?» He said: «He will be given the strength of a hundred men.»⁶

From Abu Hurayrah (RA) who said: The Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said: «Whoever enters Paradise will enjoy a life of ease not suffer: his clothes will never become worn and his youth will never fade». (Muslim).

7- The Women of Paradise

From Anas ibn Malik (RA) who said: The Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said: «Going out for Jihad and coming back is better than the world and all that is in it. A place in Paradise equal in size to the short span of the bow of any of you or the size of a whip, is better than the world and all that is in it. If any of the women of Paradise were to look towards the people of earth, she would illuminate the space between the heavens and the earth, and fill it with perfume. The veil on her head is better than the world and all that is in it». (Al-Bukhari).

From 'Abdullah ibn Umar (RA): The Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said: «The wives of the people of Paradise will sing to their spouses in the best voices anyone has ever heard. Among the words they will sing are:

We are the good and
beautiful ones.

The wives of a noble people;
They look upon us with satisfaction.

And:

We are the ones who will
live forever and never die;
We are the ones who are safe
and will never fear;
We are the ones who are
settled and will never
leave.»⁷

8- The Food and Drink of the People of Paradise

From Jabir (RA) who said: The Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said: «The People of Paradise eat and drink, but they do not pass stools, mucus or urine. Their food is that. Their burps are like the smell of musk. Praising Allah will be as natural to them as breathing». (Muslim).

From Mu'awiyah ibn Haydah (RA) who said: The Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said: «In Paradise there is a sea of water, a sea of honey, a sea of milk and a sea of wine; rivers will flow from these seas.»⁸

From Anas (RA) who said: The Prophet (SAAS) said: «Do you know what al-Kawthar is? It is a river

in Paradise which my Lord has given me; in it is much good. My Ummah (nation) will come to drink from it on the Day of Resurrection. There will be as many drinking vessels there as stars in the sky. A man will tremble, (unable to reach the drinking vessels) and I will say: "O my Lord, he is one of my Ummah" And He will say: You do not know what they did after you.»⁹

9- Descriptions of Paradise

In Paradise there is everlasting pleasure, all-pervading good, and grace from The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful.

In Paradise there are raised couches, which appear clean and pure, and cups ready for drinking -there is no need to request or prepare them; and pillows and cushions for reclining on; and carpets and rugs spread out here and there, both for decoration and rest.

For each of these blessings which are mentioned in the Book of Allah or the Sunnah of His Prophet

(SAAS), there is an earthly counterpart, but these things are mentioned only to aid the understanding of people in this world. Their reality, however, is at present understood only by Allah, The Sustainer of the Heavens and the Earth. Their nature will be understood in the Hereafter by those whom Allah decrees are worthy to enjoy them.

The life of the people of Paradise is a life of peace: peace surrounds them there, the angels greet them with peace in that atmosphere of safety. They greet one another with peace, and peace reaches them from The Most Merciful. The atmosphere is one of total peace¹⁰.

A- The Apartments of Paradise

From Abu Sa'id al-Khudri: (RA) The Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said: «The people of Paradise see the people of the apartments above them as if they were shining stars, setting on the horizon, because of the difference in status between them». They asked: «O Messenger of Allah, are these (lofty) apartments the abode of the Prophets alone, which nobody else can

reach?» He said, «No, by Him in Whose hand is my soul, (it may also be reached by) the man who believes in Allah and His Prophets». (Agreed upon).

From Abu Musa al-Ash'ari: (RA) The Prophet (SAAS) said: «In Paradise there are apartments whose outside can be seen from the inside, and whose inside can be seen from the outside. Allah has prepared them for those who give away food, who speak to people with kindness, who keep up regular fasting, and who pray at night when people are asleep.»¹¹

B- The Tents, Gardens and Soil of Paradise

From Abu Musa al-Ash'ari (RA): The Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said: «The Believer in Paradise will have a tent made from a single hollowed-out pearl, sixty miles high. The Believer there will have wives and will visit each of them in turn; none of them will be able to see the other(s)». (Agreed upon).

In a Hadith describing the Isra' [the Night Journey of the Prophet (SAAS) from Makkah to Jerusalem],

narrated from Anas ibn Malik (RA), the Prophet (SAAS) said: «.. then Jibril took me up until I reached the Lotus-tree (al-Sidrat al-Muntaha) in the Seventh Heaven, which was covered with colours, I don't know what they are! Then I was admitted to Paradise, and in it were domes and tents made of pearls, and its soil was musk». (Agreed upon).

From Abu Musa al-Ash'ari (RA): The Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said: «Two gardens, their vessels and everything in them are of silver, and two gardens, their vessels and everything in them are of gold. And there is nothing between the people and their seeing their Lord except the veil of majesty concealing His face in the Paradise of 'Aden» (Agreed upon).

C- The Trees of Paradise

From Abu Sa'id al-Khudri (RA) from the Prophet (SAAS) who said: «In Paradise there is a tree (so big that) a well-fed and well-trained horse could travel for one hundred years and still not be clear of its shade». (Agreed upon).

From Abu Hurayrah (RA) who said: The Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said: «There is not a tree in Paradise whose trunk is not made of gold»¹²

D- The Market of Paradise

From Anas ibn Malik (RA): The Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said: «In Paradise there is a market which the people will go to every Friday. A wind will come from the North and blow dust into their faces and clothes. This will increase their beauty, and they will return to their wives thus increased in beauty. Their wives will say: You have increased in beauty since we last saw you. And they will say: You too have increased in beauty since we last saw you». (Muslim).

E- The palaces of Paradise

From Jabir ibn Abdullah (RA) who said: The Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said: «I entered Paradise where (I found myself) in a palace of gold. I said, "Whose is this?" They said: "It is for a man from Quraysh." I thought that I was he, and I said, Who is he? They said: "Umar ibn al-Khattab." And nothing stopped me from entering it -O son of al-Khat-

tab- except what I know of your jealousy [i. e. regarding his family and womenfolk]. Umar said: «Would I be jealous of you, O Messenger of Allah»? (Agreed upon).

F- The Rivers of Paradise

From Anas ibn Malik (RA) who said: The Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said: «I entered Paradise and found myself standing in a river whose banks were tents of pearls. I struck the water flowing in it with my hand, and found it was the finest-smelling musk. I asked, "What is this, O Jibril?" He said: "It is al-Kawthar which your Lord has given you.»¹³

10- The Greatest Blessings in Paradise

From Suhayb ibn Sinan (RA) who said: The Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said: «When the people of Paradise enter Paradise, and the people of hell, enter Hell, a voice will call out to them: "O people of Paradise, Allah has made a promise to you which He wishes to fulfil". They will say, "What is it? Has Allah not increased [the weight of our good deeds in the] balance, and whitened our faces, admitted us to Paradise and

saved us from the Fire? Then the veil will be lifted and they will see Him. By Allah, Allah has not given them anything more dear and precious to them than that they should see Him»¹⁴.

11- The People with the Lowest and Highest Status in Paradise

From al Mughira ibn Shu'bah who said: The Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said: «Musa said to his Lord: "Who has the lowest position in Paradise?" Allah said: "It is a man who will come, after the people of Paradise have entered Paradise, and will be told: «Enter Paradise» He will say: «How is that, O my Lord, when the people have already taken the positions and rewards to which they are entitled?» He will be asked: «Would you not like to have the equivalent of the kingdom of one of the kings of the world?» He will say: «I would be satisfied with that, O my Lord», Allah will say: «You will have that». Then this exchange will be repeated four times, and on the fifth time, the man will say: «I would be satisfied with that O my Lord» and Allah will say: «This is for you, and tenfold besides. You will have what

your heart desires». The man will say, «I am satisfied with this». Musa said: «O my Lord, who has the highest position in Paradise?» Allah said: «Those whom I have chosen, and I have prepared the reward for them with My own hands and sealed it, and no eye has seen, or ear has heard, nor has it occurred to the human heart». (Muslim).



The people of Paradise are the people who truly feel the fear of Allah, the feeling which motivates them to do good works and which prevents them from transgressing. This feeling removes barriers, lifts veils and leaves the heart standing naked before the One, the Subduer (*al-Wahed, al-Qahhar*); it purifies one's worship and deeds of the impurities of hypocrisy and *Shirk*, in all their forms.

If a person truly fears his Lord, there can be no hint of insincerity in his heart or in the deeds which he does for the sake of Allah. He knows that Allah will reject every deed which he does with any other than Allah in mind, for Allah is supremely Self-sufficient

and has no need whatsoever of any partner.

Any deed must be done purely for His sake, or else it will not be accepted. The Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said: «Allah (SWT) said: I am supremely Self-sufficient and have no need whatsoever of any partner. Whoever does any deed and associates something else with Me [in his intention], I will reject him and the things he associates with Me». (Muslim).

The people of Paradise are *Muttaqin*, who fear Allah, and are alert to the dangers of committing sins. There are two fears which Allah, may He be glorified and His name blessed, does impose both together on one soul: the fear of Allah in this life, and the fear of Him on the Day of Resurrection. Whoever fears Allah in this life, Allah will grant him security in the Hereafter, and along with this security in the most terrifying of circumstances Allah will cover him with contentment and honour.¹⁵

The Prophet (SAAS) said: «Allah may He be glorified and exalted said: "I will not impose two fears on

My slave, and I will not grant him two kinds of security. If he felt safe [from My wrath] in the world, then I will cause him to feel fear on the Day of Resurrection, but if he feared Me in the world, then I will grant him security on the Day of Resurrection.»¹⁶

Footnotes:

1. One of the tenets which the Muslim is required to believe in is that both Paradise and Hell have been created and exist at present, as the Prophet (SAAS) has said: «When Ramadan comes, the gates of Paradise are opened, the gates of Hell are closed, and the devils are put in chains». (*Sahih al-Jami*, 484; see also *Hadi al-Arwah*, p 11).
2. Muslim (188).
3. *Sahih al- Jami*: 6995.
4. See also: *Sahih al-Jami*: 7873.
5. *Sahih al-Jami*: 7928.
6. Ibid, 7962.
7. Ibid, 1557.
8. Ibid, 2118.
9. Ibid, 6904.
10. Cf. *al-Yawm al-Akhir fi Dilal al-Qur'an*, 321-323.
11. *Sahih al-Jami*, 2119.
12. Ibid, 5523.
13. Ibid, 3260.
14. Ibid, 535; also *Sharh al-'Aqidah al-Tahawiyyah* (144) and *Mawarid al-Zuman fi Durus al-Zaman* (4/131-136).
15. *Al-Yawm al-Akhir fi Dilal al-Qru'an*, 332, 333.
16. *Sahih al-jami*, 4208.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE WAY TO THE PARADISE OF THE MUTTAQIN¹

This is paradise, whose features and details are clear and well-known. The way to it is easy and clearly-marked, there are no obstacles and it is well-lit. Here we stand, at the beginning of the way to Paradise, which has been described by the Messenger of Allah (SAAS) in his uniquely eloquent fashion:

«Paradise is surrounded by adversities, and Hell is surrounded by carnal appetites»²

«Every member of my Ummah (nation) will enter Paradise, except the one who refuses; whoever obeys me will enter Paradise, and whoever disobeys me has refused to enter Paradise.» (al-Bukhari).

«I have left you on a clear path, whose night is as clear as its day. None shall deviate from it apart from the one who is doomed»³

In these Ahadith, the Prophet (SAAS) has indicated the way to Paradise and explained it clearly to everyone who has the eyes to see. In a spirit of brotherhood, let us now acquaint ourselves with the way which will lead us forward to Paradise, in sha Allah (if Allah permits).

This way can be summed up in four words, two negative and two positive. The two negative words are *Shirk* (associating others with Allah) and *Ma'asi* (disobedience)- which we must avoid at all costs. The two positive words are *Iman* (true faith) and al-'Aml al-Salih (good deeds) -which we must pursue relentlessly.

The way to Paradise is referred to in the *Kalimat al-Tawhid*, (the affirmation of the Unity of Allah): «*La ilaha illa-llah, Muhammad Rasul-ullah*». The first part of this declaration means that there is none worthy of worship except Allah, the Forgiving (*al-Ghafur*), the Loving (*al-Wadud*)⁴ who alone is to be worshipped with true faith; He and His Messenger are to be obeyed in true sincerity. The second part of

this declaration means that Prophet Muhammad (SAAS) is the Messenger of Allah and is the only one in this universe who can explain how to worship Allah alone; nobody else has the right to worship Allah in any way that contradicts his guidance and teaching.

Following the sign-post of «*La ilaha illa-allah, Muhammad Rasul-ullah*», on our journey along the road to Paradise, we must make sure that our faith is firm and our belief is correct. We must believe in the following with utmost certainty:

1- That Allah (SWT) has created this universe, and He is controlling it by His Power, His Knowledge, His will, and His Wisdom. The universe contains signs of His sublime attributes and Beautiful Names. By His Power this Universe came into being and by His Knowledge He organized its systems; it is following its appointed course according to the divinely-ordained precise and marvellous natural laws.

2- That Allah (SWT) has no partner in the creation

of this universe, and no-one else is controlling it besides Him, for if that had been the case, the result would have been disorder and chaos, and the Universe would have disintegrated.

3- That just as we cannot associate anything with Allah (SWT) in the matter of creation and control, neither can we associate anything with Him in the matter of obedience and worship. We must never worship anything whatsoever besides Him, whether it be a king or a Prophet or any other part of creation, and whether the worship takes the form of prayers, supplications, fasting, sacrifice, Zakat or vows.

4- That this Almighty God -Who Alone is the Creator and Controller, and Who has the exclusive right to be worshipped- is an Almighty God Who bears the attributes of Purity, Perfection and Majesty. We affirm that He, may He be glorified, is as He has described Himself in His Book (the Qur'an), and as He has been described by the one among His creation who knows Him best, the Prophet, Muhammad (SAAS); this means that we do not attribute human

characteristics to Allah, we do not attempt to portray Him in human terms and we do not twist or distort the description of Him given in the Qur'an and Sunnah.

5- That as mankind is in need of Messengers to explain the way to Paradise, so these Messengers were sent and Books were revealed to them. Hence we must believe in and follow all of the Messengers. We must believe in the Heavenly Books which Allah revealed to those Prophets, just as we must believe in the pure Angels, and divine foreordainment, and in the fact that we will return to Allah (SWT), be called to account, and rewarded or punished accordingly.

These five points sum up sound *Iman*, which is a quarter of the way to Paradise. Let us now move on to good deeds, which form another quarter of the way:

1- We must establish regular Prayer by purifying ourselves properly for it, performing it correctly, on time and in congregation, offering both compulsory and

Sunnah paryers, and emulating the Prayer of the Messenger of Allah (SAAS).

2- We must pay Zakat from our wealth to those who are entitled to it, namely the poor, the debtors (i. e. those whose debts are overwhelming) and the *Mujahidin*. We must ensure that what we give is of good quality and that we give it in true sincerity to Allah (SWT).

3- We must fast Ramadan, abstaining from things which break our fast and avoiding any speech, deeds, thoughts and intentions which are doubtful or forbidden.

4- We must perform Hajj to the House of Allah (SWT) as the Messenger of Allah (SAAS) did, performing Hajj properly, free from any obscenity or outrage, and in a manner full of goodness and piety.

5- We must respect our parents, by obeying them in anything that does not entail disobedience to Allah (SWT), by treating them well, by speaking to them in

a proper manner, and by refraining from doing them any harm, even when there are disagreements or misunderstandings.

6- We must keep in touch with our female relatives, by respecting them, visiting them, asking after them, finding out how they are, and helping them as much as we can.

7- We must respect our neighbours, treating them well and refraining from harming or disturbing them.

8- We must honour our guests, welcoming them with the obligatory hospitality, offering them food and accommodation.

9- We must respect our fellow-Believers, being true brothers to one another and honouring the rights which one brother has over another: to greet him with peace when we meet him, to bless him when he sneezes, to attend his funeral when he dies, to visit him when he is sick, and to back him up when he swears an oath.

10- We must be fair in our words, deeds and judgments, for justice in all things is an unavoidable obligation. If there is justice, then all matters, be they religious, secular, social or economic, will be reformed and run soundly.

11- We must adhere to a proper Islamic appearance, because this is a way of reviving the Sunnah and ending the influence of Kafir ways.

This brings us to the half-way point; the next stage of the way to Paradise entails abandoning *Shirk* and disobedience, which we can do in the following ways:

1- We must not believe that any created being, whatever it is, is able to do harm or good to itself or others, except by the Will and Permission of Allah (SWT). Let us focus all our emotions on Allah (SWT), and not on anything or anyone else. Let us not ask anything of any created being, nor seek intercession or help from any other than Allah-for there is no giver or benefactor except Allah (SWT), so let us focus our hopes and fears on Him.

2- We must not direct our worship towards any except Allah (SWT), nor swear in the name of anything or anything else other than Allah. Let us not make sacrifices on any grave, no matter whose grave it was! Let us not make vows to anyone except Allah, nor call on (supplicate) or seek help from anyone else..

3- We must not hang up amulets of threads and metal in the hope that they will ward off the evil eye or keep us from harm. None can protect us from the evil eye or other kinds of harm except Allah (SWT).

4- We must not believe in fortune tellers, soothsayers and astrologers, or what they claim to know about the future. No-one can know the future except Allah (SWT).

5- We must not obey any ruler, scholar, parent or shaykh if this entails disobedience to Allah (SWT). Obedience to any other than Allah, in matters of *Halal* (Lawful) and *Haram* (Unlawful), is tantamount to *Shirk*.

The final part of the path to Paradise involves us giving up our sins; after this we will reach the gates of Paradise and enter it, in sha'Allah. In order to renounce our sins, we must take care in the following areas:

1- *Thoughts*: We should not think of anything which is harmful, evil or corrupt..

2- *Hearing*: We should not listen to any of the following forms of falsehood: sinful talk, swearing, lies, music, backbiting, slander, obscene language, or *Kufr* (blasphemy, profanity).

3- *Sight*: We should not let our sight roam freely and look at that which it is not permitted to gaze upon, namely the woman who is a stranger of non-Mahrem, whether she is Muslim or non-Muslim, of good morals or otherwise.

4- *Speech*: We should not utter bad language or obscenities, or tell lies, or bear false witness, or backbite or slander, or insult or abuse others.

5- *Stomachs*: We should not let any Haram (forbidden) food or drink enter our stomach; we should not earn our living from Riba (usury, interest); we should not eat carrion or pork; we should not drink intoxicating liquor, and we should not smoke any form of tobacco.

6- *Private parts*: we should not have sexual intercourse with anyone except our lawful wives, or the concubines whom Allah (SWT) has made permissible.

7- *Hands*: We should not harm anyone, by beating or killing them; we should not take *Haram* earnings; we should not gamble; and we should not write false documents or anything which goes against Islam.

8- *Legs*: We should not walk towards vain and idle activities, or hasten to commit acts of corruption and evil.

9- *Promises*, trusts and acts of witness; We should not break our promises, violate our agreements, go

back on our word, give false testimony or betray our trust.

10- *Wealth:* We should not be extravagant or waste our wealth; nor should we neglect to take care of it; we should not leave our wealth without trying to invest it in good.

11- *Family and children:* We should take care of their physical, mental and moral welfare, and ensure that their faith and beliefs are sound. We should defend them against anything that may damage their hearts and minds, and protect them from anything which could destroy them or lead to their ultimate doom in Hell.

This is the way to paradise, so let us be prepared to put it into practice in our own lives. We cannot do this without sound knowledge based on the Book of Allah (SWT) and the Sunnah of His prophet (SAAS).

This brings to a close the description of paradise and

the way which leads to it, as it was described by Allah (SWT) in His Book and explained by His prophet (SAAS) in the sound Ahadith.

I ask Allah (SWT) to make this work of mine purely for Him, and to forgive the writer, his parents, his Shaykhs and the readers, and to make them among the people of Paradise. May this book benefit all those whom it reaches. Allah is the best of those whom we ask, and in whom we place our hopes. He is sufficient for us and the best of guardians.

All praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds.

Abu'l-Harith Ali ibn Hasan

Footnotes:

1. Adapted from *Rassa'il al-Jaza'iri*. 634-639.
2. *Sahih al-Jami*; 3142.
3. *Sahih al-Targhib wa-Tarhib*, 58.
4. See: Khalid Muhammad'Ali al-Haj, *Masra'al-Shirk wa'l-Khurafah*, 17-34.

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